BOSTON UNIVERSITY
JOURNAL OF EDUCATION

Established 1875

VOLUME 139 FEBRUARY, 1957 NUMBER 3

Can We Help Children to Write?

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CONTENTS

PART ONE — THE TASKS WHICH CHALLENGE THE TEACHER . . 3

FUNCTIONAL WRITING 4

CREATIVE WRITING 13

PART TWO — SOME ILLUSTRATIVE PROCEDURES 20

Published four times a year (October, December, February, and April) by Boston University School of Education, 332 Bay State Road, Boston 15, Massachusetts. Subscription price $3.00 a year; 2 years, $5.50. (In Canada, $3.50 a year; foreign, $4.00 a year.) Single copies $1.00. Entered as second-class matter, Boston, Massachusetts, October 30, 1953. Change of address should be sent promptly, giving both the old and the new address. Copyright, 1957, Trustees of Boston University. All rights reserved.

CAN WE HELP CHILDREN TO WRITE?

PART ONE. THE TASKS WHICH CHALLENGE THE TEACHER

For several years it has been known that language is one of the most unpopular subjects in the modern curriculum. Careful inspection indicates that written language rates lower than the oral skills. Apparently today's children prefer to talk, and find the task of transferring the same glibness to the written word both difficult and boring.

This knowledge should challenge the classroom teacher. If children dislike a subject intensely, is there something inherent in its presentation which engenders this antipathy? In recent years English texts have improved markedly. They are attractively covered and illustrated. The work is arranged in units and around themes in order to make it functional. Topics and situations are designed in profusion but the approach to writing is concentrated heavily in capitalization, usage, and matters of structure. The very nature of the task makes such instruction necessary.

Our problem is to find a way to help children to develop these skills in such a manner that they are eager to learn, see the need for the task and do not lose sight of the purpose for writing because of an overdose of isolated teaching of mechanics. This problem is far from being solved. Its answer lies in experimentation conducted in classrooms throughout the country. There is a very real need for research but the area seems as unpopular with adults as with children. Multiple examples of research can be found in reading for each study of writing and within the writing field itself studies of error count in capitalization, punctuation and usage far outnumber those studies designed to discover ways for motivating children to write, to increase organizational skill or to stimulate the flow of ideas.

We live in a world of movies, radio, and television — an era of oral communication. The writer is in complete sympathy with a strong oral program throughout the elementary grades and beyond, to equip the child for participation in daily communication and to serve as a basis for writing. In our enthusiasm for this oral program we must not overlook the heavy social and professional penalty experienced by an individual who is unable to express himself in writing when the necessity arises. The skills underlying this ability are many: when to capitalize; what to capitalize; how to spell; how to use marks of punctuation; how to organize a sentence, a paragraph, the entire composition; even such problems as how to form and join letters, all contribute to making writing a complicated task. Of even greater importance than these, knowing what to say, recognizing that one has something to communicate, accepting writing as a necessary tool of communication are basic to the problem.

No one knows the best way to teach this skill. No one can guarantee that any stated technique will work for all children. The straight grammatical approach as against a freer, more functional approach will no doubt be argued for some time to come. The power of the teacher to have children enjoy and succeed in writing is limitless. Her patience, ingenuity and understanding are strong motivators in producing boys and girls for whom writing is both fun and a useful tool.

It is the purpose of this presentation to suggest techniques to aid the teacher in a program in written language at the elementary level. Because the nature of the task and the method of teaching are different for functional and creative writing they will be handled in separate sections.

FUNCTIONAL WRITING

Many of the writing skills with which we are concerned in the elementary school are functional in nature. The need for their use rises daily in connection with the assignments and activities in all of the subject areas. All children need help in the development of this kind of writing. These skills lend themselves to a type of teaching which can be described as developmental or step wise. Introduced to the task in a simple way at an early level the child improves and grows in understanding and ability as breadth of experience and multiple opportunities for use are provided. This section will present suggestions for helping children with this phase of the program.

Background for Writing

Children enter school eager to write as evidenced by their delight in a pencil and a piece of paper. Most youngsters have indulged in letters, grocery lists and various other writing tasks as an inherent part of the imaginary life that is part and parcel of the pre-school world. As the children are introduced to the more formal world of language various changes take place in their writing attempts. Some continue to write as before, others ask for help in spelling words and formulating letters, others continue to write in meaningless symbols but disclaim any effort to interpret by explaining that they cannot read. If desire to write can be construed as a factor of readiness most of us would grant it is present early and in quantity.

An analysis of specific background skills in reading would reveal auditory discrimination, visual discrimination, knowledge of letter names, knowledge of letter sounds and general facility in spoken language as essential to success. All of these things contribute markedly to success in writing but several other things must be added. The ability to form letters, to recall letter forms, to spell, to capitalize, to punctuate, are needed in the simplest written tasks. There is no necessity that they be known in a precise, mechanical fashion according to rule but the child must have had some experience with them before attempting to write independently.

How and where can these skills be acquired? There seems a very natural approach to this problem at early levels. As the youngsters grow more accurate and fluent in speech and more conversant with its various purposes, kindergarten and first grade teachers act as scribes and transfer the spoken word to the chalkboard. Attention is called to spelling, the use of the capital at the beginning of the sentence, the period to indicate a long pause. No effort is made to drill on this type of material but constant reiteration develops understanding for many children. In the same manner the first grade teacher can call attention to the capitalization and punctuation in the reading books. This contributes to a readiness for writing and helps also to develop a better understanding and interpretation of the printed material used for reading.

During the time that we are working for facility in oral expression we are also building a background for written work. The child who has learned to answer questions in a complete sentence, who has had practice in orderly arrangement of ideas in story telling, and who has been guided to pause when a thought is completed, has a basis for writing upon which he can lean heavily. In short from the very beginning the child can be aided to see the relationship in speaking, reading and writing. By thoughtful planning and discussion in relation to particular problems the teacher can make the child truly conversant with the simple rudiments of writing without burdening him with an isolated teaching of rules that he fails to understand or apply.

Transition to Writing

All of the suggestions in the foregoing section could be followed carefully. The teacher could constantly act as scribe and as soon as the children had learned to write they could copy what the teacher had written. Would this alone lead most of the children to enjoy writing and move naturally to independent efforts? In the opinion of the writer something more specific is needed. Children kept too long in a situation where all writing consists of copying a class note or story from the board makes writing a dull process. Individuality is squelched, the need to say and communicate personal thinking and feeling is minimized. Something should be done for those children who are ready and eager which will enable them to write independently with some degree of success. The following procedures may prove helpful in bringing this about.

Writing answers to questions can be introduced at a second grade level. The simplest procedure is to teach the children to write a complete sentence answer to a question checking comprehension of material read. The teacher settles a reading group in close proximity to a chalkboard or chart. After the story has been read she writes her questions on the board one at a time encouraging the children to answer each in a complete sentence. The simplest question would involve "who", e.g. "Who went to see Grandmother?" In the beginning the one word answer will predominate but through questions and discussion it is easy to indicate that one uses all the words in the question for a complete answer, merely substituting a name for "*who*".

The second step is to encourage a child to write on the board the complete answer to the question. It will be necessary to point out that the words needed in the answer are in the question with the exception of the name which can be found in the reader. There is further discussion of the capital at the beginning and the period at the end of the sentence. The reading books are handy for reference and illustration. The need for the capital and the punctuation is realized in the purpose of the lesson.

Step three leads the children to write their answers on paper. The teacher does not leave the group but sits with them, answering questions, assisting those who have difficulty and encouraging the more timid. This procedure is followed until the children are secure and can be left to write independently.

During the year the questions can be made more and more difficult but each step in difficulty requires careful teaching and guidance. It cannot be assumed that from this point on the transfer is automatic.

A good procedure in terms of difficulty is to introduce questions in this order: Who, When, Where, Why, What. In answering some questions a change in verb form will be needed in the answer, e.g., Where did Alice go? (went). The word in parentheses helps the child to formulate his sentence. The use of the book is constantly encouraged. Another example:

Why did Bill want a bicycle? (wanted, because). Here again the teacher would indicate the bracketed words as an aid in answering the question.

It is neither suggested nor implied that this type of written answer should be a daily requirement at any level. It should be taught slowly and carefully and utilized throughout the year along with yes and no, multiple choice and completion checks. When all reading comprehension checks require one word or phrase answers in oral or written form, we are losing an opportunity to teach the sentence and its use in a very functional and self motivated situation.

With a minimum of help and without drill in isolation children who have acquired this skill can be guided to see its use in many of the daily tasks requiring writing.

Guided dictation is helpful in leading the child to independent writing. At the first grade level children are encouraged to compose notes and stories which the teacher writes on the chalkboard. This is usually a class composition in which all of the children are encouraged to participate. Attention is directed to the various technical aspects of writing and the children copy the work from the board. The latter step is introduced only when the teacher is assured that the children write with ease, and it should at all times be supervised.

Dictation is an outgrowth of this activity. The teacher must decide which children are ready and introduce this step when the need arises. It is usually initiated in connection with a short, simple note or story.

Example: We went for a walk.
We saw many leaves.
They were red, and yellow and brown.

The teacher calls attention to each sentence. Why did *we* begin with a capital? What do you see at the end of the sentence? Why? Notice the way *walk* is spelled, etc. Close your eyes. Can you remember how these words look? *We went for a walk.* What do you do to the "w" in *we?* What do you place at the end of the sentence? Etc.

After each sentence has been studied in detail, the story is erased. The children are given paper. As the teacher dictates, the children write the story. No help is given during dictation though such words as walk — colored — leaves — could be left on the board for reference.

It is good practice to have pencils put away as soon as the dictation is over. The story is rewritten on the board. The children compare their papers with the board and make corrections with colored crayon. Later the teacher can go over the papers to check unnoticed errors and to formulate her plans for future group or individual teaching.

After a few lessons of this type children can be encouraged to try independent writing and often do so on their own initiative if board space, bulletin space or paper is made available.

Chalk or Wall Boards to Encourage Writing

In the primary grades it is a good plan to line a section of chalkboard or prepare newsprint in a similar manner and tack it to a bulletin or wall board. Children are free to go to these spaces and write whenever they have leisure time. Use of the reading book and personal spelling book is encouraged. The stories can be read to the class and individuals can be complimented and encouraged.

If for any reason someone is desirous of copying the story to place in a booklet or on a display board, the teacher must give some time to proofreading with the writer and aid in any way that will provide wholesome growth but allow the story to remain basically unchanged. Under no circumstances should the story be edited until the youngster no longer feels it is his work and thereby loses all interest. Working under this same principle it would be unwise to insist on correcting and rewriting every story the child attempts. Common sense and an understanding of individuals guide the teacher to wise decisions in this instance.

Proofreading

The value of proofreading as a means to correct writing is well established. It can be developed in a step-wise pattern with the quality and quantity of the task increasing with the child's maturity and understanding. A guide sheet of questions assists children to independent proofreading.

Example:
1. Does every sentence begin with a capital?
2. Does every name begin with a capital?
3. Is there a mark of punctuation after every sentence? (. ? !)

Guided proofreading in the elementary grades is one of the best ways of pointing out those phases of mechanics and structure for which the child shows need. Instead of writing in all corrections with a colored pencil the teacher returns the paper to which she has attached a check sheet to indicate error.

Example:		
	Punctuation	2 periods missing
	Capitals	3 capitals missing
	Complete Sentences	1 incomplete
	Spelling	4 errors

This system eliminates the discouraging aspect of a paper covered with red or blue marks. It also permits the teacher to divide the children into small groups according to type of error. More important, it places the youngster in the position where he must do something positive in terms of locating his own errors. This in itself provides a better teaching and learning situation. The teacher remains with the group during the process so that she can provide immediate assistance.

At this point it seems important to stress the value of reading aloud to locate error. This is particularly valuable in matters of clarity, fragments, run-on sentences and end punctuation. It is an aspect of proofreading which should be stressed for children and adults.

Guided proofreading is most valuable on an individual basis. Small slips of paper which serve as appointment cards can be given to three or four children. At the time noted on the slip the child reports to the teacher and is given individual instruction in relation to some piece of writing. Five minutes with one child often bring more lasting results than daily class instruction for longer periods.

On the basis of the errors discovered, skills can be taught when the need is greatest. One study (1) of this type was tried with children of grades three, four, five, and six. In the beginning proofreading was done in small groups under the teacher's guidance. Later the children worked in pairs. Finally they worked entirely alone. All skills teaching during this period was based on the errors found in the compositions. A careful analysis was made of each composition. Samples were taken from each child, before, during and at the end of the study. An error count was made on each composition. Comparisons were charted for each child. The totals were computed and reported for the final data.

At first glance it looked as though the process was multiplying error. In terms of total count there were more errors after two weeks of teaching than there had been initially. Close investigation revealed that as the children gained security they were becoming more fluent and venturesome and the opportunities for error were thereby increased. As the weeks went by careful analysis showed that one type of error was corrected only to be replaced by another as the youngsters tried some new and more complex approach. Other children who had been so cautious as to produce almost nothing in the beginning, albeit without error, were now spreading their wings and making the same types of errors the more advanced children had made at the beginning of the study.

The big problem for the teacher is whether she is seeking something dull and trite but structurally and mechanically perfect or less perfection with evidence of maturity of thought and complexity of structure. The latter course makes her task never-ending and requires much individual guidance and teaching. The former can lull the spirit and soothe the conscience with a feeling of pseudo accomplishment. Each teacher must choose for herself the course she wishes to follow in the light of her ultimate goal in written language.

Letter Writing

One of the most widely used of the writing skills is that of letter writing. It is emphasized throughout the elementary school and is one of the first types of formal writing the children experience. Countless opportunities arise in every classroom for writing notes and letters.

In the early grades a very simple form is acceptable.

Example:

Will you come to our party?
John

Later a salutation properly placed gives the first feeling for form.

Example:

Dear Mother,
Will you come to our Christmas party?
Judy

The content of the body of the letter increases as the children grow in facility with written expression. In the third grade a full heading is usually introduced as progress is made from the note to the friendly letter.

The teacher can help each child to prepare a letter heading using his own street and number. If she encourages him to use it each time he writes a letter she will soon find the majority of the children are able to formulate the three lines correctly without help. Explanation of the punctuation and capitalization is specific and related to the purpose in the heading but extended uses can be made during the discussions in guided proofreading. A heading prepared for a child's own use has greater value than a model prepared on board, book, or chart. This is his very own and in most instances will serve for a long period of time.

In any discussion of letter writing it is well to note that this is a writing skill by which our teaching is often judged. Many times the letter or card which comes from camp startles the parent into an evaluation of the school program.

Though letter writing is listed as one of the tools or writing skills it can be brought to life if the teacher will be alert to opportunity. Two illustrations follow.

In one second grade classroom the children decided to mail an invitation to the third grade rather than deliver it in the usual fashion. The entire class stood in the windows to watch the mailing process. Just as the children turned to re-enter the school, the mail collector drove up and emptied the box. The children talked to him a long time and then ran into the school. Breathlessly they explained that they had told the mailman not to take the letter away, but to take it into the school! Why did he take it away with him? Why didn't he bring it in? What better opportunity for a trip to the post office, for an understanding of the postal service, for the writing of many letters of all types?

In another instance a group of third grade children composed a letter to inquire about the price of grain which they needed to feed their two pigeons. The letter so impressed the recipient that he not only gave the children the information they needed but sent them a pair of fantail pigeons and a cage. The alert teacher used these pigeons for every conceivable type of writing experience. Descriptions of birds and their habitats; invitations to parents, principals and other rooms; simple outlines of material read about pigeons; lists of things to do to prepare for the many visitors; records of care and feeding of the birds; experience stories which grew out of the many activities; imaginative stories and poems; all types of writing were accomplished as the pigeons flew about or sat quietly on their perches cooing softly to themselves.

Some teachers may be allergic to pigeons and others may think it is silly to mail a note which could be delivered by walking upstairs, but few will argue that the children involved in these incidents wrote without purpose to fulfill a routine assignment.

Note Taking

In the content areas today we are stressing wide reading which is shared through reports both oral and written. These reports require note taking. It is not unusual to see children reading magazines and books and taking notes in preparation for these sharing periods. Left to their own devices

with little instruction, most children copy sentences, paragraphs, and even pages of material from the book.

Some training in locating the main idea in a paragraph or section and help in re-writing it in brief and simple form would eliminate much of this copying. In this activity as in many others, group and individual instruction will pay big dividends. Taking the time to read the notes with the child, referring back to the book, indicating the necessity for quotation marks if material is copied, will make for better understanding of the purpose of the notes, more efficient use of material read, and richer more interesting reports.

Outlining

This skill is also very closely tied in to the content areas. Outlining is valuable in the preparation of oral and written reports and serves as the basis for study and recall of material read. The teaching of outlining ties in with the note taking previously discussed. The ability to locate major and minor ideas, and a feeling for sequences is a necessary prerequisite. Use of the skeletal outline gives children an understanding of the basic principle involved.

Example 1. Music in Colonial Days

I. Jamestown Colony and Virginia
   - A. .....
   - B. .....
   - C. .....

II. New England
   - A. .....
   - B. .....
   - C. .....

In this instance the main topic is given. The child reads to fill in the minor ideas.

Example 2. Music in Colonial Days

I. .....
   - A. Ballads
   - B. Chants
   - C. Rounds

II. .....
   - A. Psalmody
   - B. Folk Songs
   - C. Ballads

Here the process is reversed. Given the minor ideas, can the child fill in the related major ideas?

Example 3.

I. .....

A. .....

B. .....

II. .....

A. .....

B. .....

In this step no material is included, but the structural organization is presented and the child merely reads and fills in the various parts of the outline.

Example 4.

Try it alone.

At this point the child is instructed to read and outline. Work with material of a factual nature such as that found in the geography, history or science books lends itself to the outline process. To teach outlining in relation to a story or legend is often very difficult, for the organizational pattern is not as clear.

Many opportunities for practice on the steps presented, wherein the teacher makes her presentation to the group or class and then prepares worksheets which the children handle in pairs or groups of three and four will facilitate ability in this skill. Children profit by discussing the outline with each other and by the later group or class analysis under teacher guidance. Though most children have some contact with outlining in the elementary school, few teachers provide the extensive practice, *under guidance* that makes it a usable skill. For superior children this type of activity can be utilized in connection with many enriching activities.

Filling in Forms

In today's world no one is exempt from the necessity of filling in forms. Opportunities for its use rival those of the note or letter. To get a library card; to deposit money or withdraw it from the bank; to write a check; to send for a sample; to purchase by mail; to send a money order; to process the income tax; one must have the ability to read and fill in the required information. In addition, practice in fitting the writing to the allotted space is very necessary. Much of the information required is consistent throughout life. Name, date and place of birth, father's name, mother's name, do not change. Familiarity with this information in written form can be acquired in the elementary school. The teacher can mimeograph facsimile of common forms on inexpensive paper. Children can be encouraged to practice fitting the writing to the space and supplying the correct information complete with correct spelling and punctuation. It requires little or no teaching beyond seeing that each child has the information required and some direction to try it on the forms provided.

Making Writing Important

Writing is one of the four areas of communication. It does not stand by itself alone. It is needed only when one has something to communicate which cannot be accomplished through the medium of speech. The school program abounds with opportunities for use of this skill. Social studies, science, health, music, art, reading, all are dependent in no small measure on the use of writing. If we divorce the writing skills from the rest of the school day and teach only in the thirty or forty minutes so designated, we do little to make it important and usable for the child. Certain teaching of writing skill *per se* will be necessary for individuals and small groups who are having difficulty, but the practice in the skills taught must be closely related to the content areas of the program. When these functional skills are handled only in isolation as another language hurdle to be overcome, they can be meaningless, impersonal and dull. When the teacher so plans that these skills are used in relation to something vital and necessary, learning becomes important to the child and motivation is made easy. The best teaching of language is often done in connection with some other area of the program. The teacher should see language as functioning throughout the school day and constantly be alert to opportunities for teaching which arise naturally in the need to accomplish certain purposes or goals set up in other subjects. The following is a list of writing opportunities which can be found in science and social studies:

1. Captions for material on bulletin boards or display tables
2. Bibliographies for reports
3. Book reviews
4. Summaries
5. Announcements
6. New words I like in the History unit
7. Lists (Some surprises Columbus experienced on his first voyage; materials needed in a science experiment; props required for a play, etc.)
8. Diaries (e.g., a boy in Plymouth)
9. Play in two scenes to be read to the class
10. An advertisement such as William Penn might have used in Europe to advertise Pennsylvania
11. Charts
12. Who's Who in American History or Who's Who before 1620
13. Newspaper headlines
14. Class or school newspaper
15. Newspaper written for some historical period
16. Invitations
17. Write a test for the class
18. Write for materials
19. Thank you notes
20. Letters to pen pals
21. Create a log kept on the ship of one of the early explorers (4)
22. Write a radio program (4)
23. Write letters from sailors who were members of exploring parties (4)
24. Write a guide to American settlements in 1700 (4)
25. Write a set of rules for a colony (4)
26. Make a dictionary of antiques (4)

27. Series of bulletins from "War Correspondents" covering the Revolutionary War (4)
28. Create a history of some state or city (4)
29. Spin "yarns" similar to those spun by Davy Crockett (4)
30. Directions for making an aquarium, or terrarium
31. Record of birds that come to a feeding tray
32. Record of how bulbs grew
33. Booklet of birds, trees, or flowers
34. Captions for diagrams of the constellations

Making lists, keeping records, and bibliographies are areas which can be taught in the same manner as those described previously. These are the practical areas of communication. The teaching of these skills is step wise and concerned with accuracy and efficiency. Because they are skills we must exercise every caution to keep the purpose important. It would be very easy to emphasize the *how* of the process to the extent that the *why* was forgotten or lost.

The act of writing does not stand by itself alone. It is completely dependent on the need to communicate a thought, an idea, a message. At no time should we become so bogged down in the process that we lose sight of the goal — children who recognize the need for writing and approach the task with security and understanding.

CREATIVE WRITING

Creativity in writing is interpreted from many differing points of view. There are those who are concerned primarily with originality of thought or ideas. Others maintain that the thought or idea may not be new but its expression and interpretation should be unique. On the other hand there are those who believe that creativity lies in an interpretation of one's own experiences through the medium of writing. This latter point of view implies a recognition of the worth of experience, a desire to share inner feelings and reactions and a sensitivity to the need for expressing oneself in such a way that the experience is truly explained through the medium of words.

Since we are concerned with children in the elementary school most of us will be working from both of the above viewpoints. Originality of thought or idea is desirable and something we do not belittle, but the interpretation and sharing of experiences of recognized worth is for us the more lucrative field.

Techniques for initiating this type of writing are not as clear cut, due to the fact that we are not dealing with the utilitarian, and creativity does not lend itself to the step-wise developmental teaching presented in the previous section. Here we are faced with the task of encouraging children to write with freedom about those things and in that way which satisfies their own purposes. This in itself makes it difficult for many teachers. Actually there is no set pattern or procedure which can be outlined. The results are free and sometimes growth is difficult to determine and teachers are reluctant to embark on a program in which they feel little or no security.

It is well to remember that a writing program must sustain interest in spite of some of the more discouraging aspects which take root in the complexity of the task and the need for mechanical correctness. Children must be encouraged and aided to write in situations which emphasize an

expression of thought and feeling. In these instances the child should be free to write in his own way unhampered by instructions as to form and correctness.

The teacher who is truly interested can share her enthusiasm with the children in many ways. The teaching situation will resolve itself into provision for time, encouragement, and much work with individuals.

Motivation

Truly creative writing is self-motivated for it is writing that is done because one feels the need to express oneself. Since for most people this is a learned procedure something must be done to lead the children to understand this facet of writing.

Through the oral language and reading programs children can be led to understand that people share their thinking and feeling by means of writing and thereby entertain and give much pleasure to others. This is done in many ways and in connection with many activities but it will provide the beginning of an interest which can be channeled to free writing activities as soon as the youngsters gain some security in the needed skills.

Providing a time to write when each child is permitted to follow his own ideas is helpful in intermediate grades. During the week the teacher can comment on various things that the children tell about and indicate the possibility for a story. In the writing period the teacher helps individuals who need assistance in spelling or punctuation but does not bother children who are seemingly having no difficulty. Sometimes it may be necessary to sit with an individual and help him to get started through quiet conversation.

Giving children notebooks in which they are told they may write anything they choose, original stories and poems or poems they know and like has worked in some classes. The child may write in his booklet whenever he has free time. Often these writing booklets are very personal and need not be exposed to others. Sometimes they are designated for the purpose of sharing writing with parents. At other times the notebook is used merely to jot down ideas which will be enlarged upon during the writing period.

Sections of chalkboard and newsprint on bulletins will often encourage a child in the primary grades to write a story. During free time the child goes to the board and writes. Later he shares his story by reading it to the class or the teacher can read it for him.

Essentially the motivation for free writing lies in the attitude of the teacher and the rapport she is able to establish with her class. If the children feel the teacher is kind, understanding and sincere in her desire to have them write; if they sense her interest in writing and grow to share it; if they recognize her pleasure in their efforts; most of them will be sufficiently motivated to make the attempt. Once they have taken this initial step the program is usually on its way.

Increasing the Flow of Ideas

It is not uncommon to have teachers complain that the children seem to have difficulty in getting started on a story. The following ideas have

been tried in experimental studies and have proved effective in freeing children to write.

Use of music has had a marked success in stimulating ideas. The children are encouraged to listen to recordings. Simple directions are given to stimulate some thinking in relation to the listening. Children are then asked to write the story which they thought of while listening. Often an intermediary step is introduced in the form of a drawing which is done while listening. The story is then written to go with the picture. (See Part Two for specific directions.)

Use of unrelated objects often produces unusual stories. Several objects are placed on a table or displayed on a bulletin. The children are asked to write a story using all of the objects. The type of story can be colored by the choice of objects. One may deliberately choose in such a way that the story will have an element of humor or mystery.

The same technique can be employed in a set of phrases arranged in random order.

Use of a diorama prepared in the art lesson about any subject the child chooses provides a starting point for a story. It may be an under-water scene. It may be connected with the country being studied. When the dioramas are completed the children look into the little world they have constructed and try to imagine themselves as part of it. Many interesting stories have been produced in this way. (See Part Two for specific directions.)

Displaying several different pairs of shoes, such as loafers, ballet slippers, sneakers, etc. on a table and telling a story connected with one of the pairs can stimulate many ideas. The children are left to lean on their own experiences and produce a story in relation to any of the shoes on display or shoes of their own. They can bring to the story experiences real, vicarious and imaginary and often turn out many very interesting compositions.

Pictures for purposes of stimulating stories are used from the Kindergarten throughout the school years. In the later grades it is more productive to suggest that the illustration serve as the beginning or climax of a story constructed by the children. The mere recording of that which is portrayed rarely produces anything worthwhile and is not too strong a motivating device. Use of the picture to stimulate the child to construct events which led to the situation portrayed encourages a more colorful attempt.

The above suggestions are included as a means of helping children to get a good start. An alert teacher can produce any number which will fit better in her particular situation. Notice that though the devices listed above are planned, they are so constructed that in no instance do they channel an individual's thinking. The child is free to think, to feel, to imagine. The purpose is to stimulate the thinking but the individual does not have to fit his thoughts to a set pattern. Titles, events, mode of expression will vary markedly.

If any child had something he wanted to write that was completely apart from the planned lesson he could do so. These are prepared for those children who have no urge or need and will profit by the stage setting.

Writing Poetry

Some people lead children to the writing of poetry with marked success. Others in spite of valiant effort never produce much above the level of doggerel. Sober reflection might lead one to the conclusion that children who had experienced success with prose might be encouraged to try the more difficult medium of poetry.

The best procedure for leading children to write poetry is to expose them to a period of listening. Most children enjoy the rhythm and melody of poems that are read well.

Before reading aloud, the poem should be practiced until it slips smoothly from the tongue. It should be well understood by the reader in order that there will be no blurring of thought or break in cadence.

This reading is not done for purposes of analysis but for pleasure in listening. Many poems of different types are shared at odd times until the children come to look forward to and ask for the reading. As the children become interested attention can be directed to the lilt and the melody, to the phrases, to the careful choice of words to convey a picture, or idea or feeling.

Often an individual will try a poem on his own. If the teacher will read it to the class, and be truly interested, more will be produced. Sometimes beginning poetry attempts are produced by the class a line at a time while the teacher acts as scribe. Other teachers merely suggest after a long period of contact with poetry that the children may wish to try this type of writing.

Perhaps it is unwise to pressure all children into trying to write poetry. The contact through listening can harm no one, however, and it may encourage some child to venture where he would never have entered alone.

The following are samples of poetry written by children as a result of the informal approach described above. The emphasis was placed on the ideas and the words used to convey them. Rhyming was incidental and in some instances non-existent.

Carrots

Susan brought some carrots in
Then put them in a coffee tin.
They grew up, oh so high
Until they almost reached the sky.
I love to watch them in the tin
The tin that Susan put them in.
— Grade 3

The New Moon

The new moon is like a smiling mouth
Out there in the night.
Do you suppose that's God's way of telling us
Everything's all right?
— Grade 3

Animals

Animals are just like people
They eat and sleep and grow.
They can act kind and gentle
But sometimes they get angry, too.
When they are cross they growl
Just like people do.

— Grade 2

The Weeping Willow

The weeping willow stood alone
As though it were to cry and moan.
The strong wind blew through its lonely leaves
And then it settled in the breeze.

— Patricia O'Connell, Grade 6

Storm

A jagged light across the sky
A roar of thunder as it clashes by
Rain tapping on the window and all dark outside
The fear of the rain. The flash and roar.

— Jimmy Lane, Grade 6

Night Mood

The mood of night hung heavy and dark
The fog hung still on the docks
On the corner the clock struck three
The air was thick and heavy and only I stood there to see
I felt alone in this vast world
When a gull flew down, and the dawn broke through
And the mood of night was gone.

— Carol Jamison, Grade 6

Rain

Rain is like a little child
With its delicate laughter against a window pane
Its enraging tears which gradually fade and then
Completely disappear into the still desolate time of day.
Rain is like a little child.

Rain is like a song —
Piano, crescendo, diminuendo.
Like a Hungarian rhapsody with its many moods
Of gaiety, mournfulness — staccato and legato.
Rain is like a song.

Rain – Rain – Farmers pray for the life-giving showers
Which gracefully fall from the heavens.
A gift of God to bring the many plants above the soil
To give blessed life to the small seedlings.
Rain – rain – rain.

— Natalie Oliver, Grade 7

Ann Rutledge, Lincoln's First Love

Buried was she in a bluegrass pasture
Filled was the place with heavenly dew and the soft sweet sounds
of rapture.
Peaceful she lay for many a year and with each passing day
Abe's sorrow and love for her became more and more dear.
Oh, beautiful Ann Rutledge, her soul rests in heaven above
Ann Rutledge, Abe Lincoln's first love,
Abe Lincoln's first love.

— Kenneth Terban, Grade 8

The matter of correctness in the creative phase of writing is a delicate one. In order to encourage children to express their thoughts in their own way it is necessary to free them from the mechanical aspects. As they gain in knowledge and skill through the functional program, much can and will be transferred to their personal writing. Material should always be proofread before being presented to the teacher. It is good practice to allow proofreading in pairs so that children can help each other to avoid common errors. To facilitate the corrections it is wise to suggest the writing be done in pencil. Some children will also be unable to finish a composition in the time allotted. It should be made clear that the work can be continued. Expecting children to produce a completed story during a half hour on a stated day can be very discouraging.

Progress in this type of writing is dependent in a large measure on the willingness of the teacher to spend time in helping individual children. As she proofreads with a child she can give a great deal of insight into matters of clarity, structure, and punctuation in connection with something both important and real. It is unwise to assume that growth will take place without guidance. The teacher who is sensitive to the personalities of her children can help individuals to improve without belittling the importance of the original work. A few minutes of this type of teaching combined with many opportunities to write, will produce more growth than several isolated lessons with the class as a whole.

Summary

A great deal can be done to help children to write. The plan here outlined has two distinct phases. The functional, which is concerned with form and matters of correctness but at all times stresses the communication aspect and builds in the child an understanding of writing as an expression of himself in absentia, is developed in a sequential step-wise procedure. The teaching is carefully planned and has many formal aspects.

The creative stresses the importance of sharing one's feeling and ideas with others. The approach is informal. It is concerned with developing an attitude and understanding which originates in part in an appreciation of the writing of others. The child is free to write as he thinks and feels and the matter of correctness comes with maturity and a concern for sharing.

Opportunities for giving children a feeling of power, of accomplishment and of ability to communicate in writing must be provided. The teacher

can so plan and guide children in these experiences that the learning becomes important and the program is lifted from the routine and mundane.

Both phases are essential to a written language program. Both phases need much experimentation in order for us to gain new insight and new techniques. Classroom teachers with imagination and initiative, who are willing to break the lock-step and organize for new ventures, can help to solve many of our present language problems. This cannot be accomplished by constantly teaching twenty-eight or thirty-six children the same thing, at the same time, from the same text. It will not come to pass with countless exercises for punctuation, capitalization, and usage.

We are working to give children security, understanding, and ability in written communication. The program can be as vital or as deadly as we choose to make it.

PART TWO. SOME ILLUSTRATIVE PROCEDURES

In working with the various classes which have participated in our experimental programs, it has been found helpful to make an inventory of the children's attitudes toward writing. Frank answers to questions as to what things were causing difficulty have helped teachers to plan a writing program geared to class needs. For this reason a questionnaire has been included which may be given to children in grades four, five and six. Teachers might find it interesting to use the questionnaire before a block of teaching devoted to a stimulation of interest in and ideas for writing. It could be used again at the end of the teaching as a partial evaluation of the procedure.

QUESTIONNAIRE

Name..... Date.....

1. Do you like to have someone read to you? Check one:
   Sometimes ..... Always ..... Never .....
2. Do you remember what is read? Check one:
   Sometimes ..... Always ..... Never .....
3. Do *you* like to read? Check one:
   Sometimes ..... Always ..... Never .....
4. Do you like to have someone tell you a story? Check one:
   Sometimes ..... Always ..... Never .....
5. What is your favorite subject in school?
   .....
   Why? .....
   .....
6. What subject do you like the least?
   .....
   Why? .....
   .....
7. Have you done a lot of story writing? Check one:
   Yes ..... No .....
8. Would you rather tell a story than write one? Check one:
   Tell ..... Write .....
9. Do you have a hard time thinking of something to write about? Check one:
   Sometimes ..... Always ..... Never .....
10. Do you like to write on titles given to you or would you rather have one of your own choice? Check one:
    Titles given ..... Titles chosen .....
11. Would you rather write with a pencil or a pen? Check one:
    Pencil ..... Pen .....
12. Does spelling bother you when writing a story? Check one:
    Sometimes ..... Always ..... Never .....
13. Does capitalization bother you when writing a story? Check one:
    Sometimes ..... Always ..... Never .....

14. Does punctuation bother you when writing a story? Check one:
Sometimes ..... Always ..... Never .....

15. Do you sometimes have an idea but find it difficult to express in words? Check one:
Sometimes ..... Always ..... Never .....

16. Do you find it hard to write a good sentence? Check one:
Sometimes ..... Always ..... Never .....

17. Where do you get your ideas for stories? Check *any:*
Books ..... Movies ..... T.V. .....
Magazines ..... Radio ..... Imagination .....
Experience ..... Others .....

18. Do you ever write stories at home? Check one:
Yes ..... No .....

19. Would you like to read to someone the stories you have written? Check one:
Yes ..... No .....

20. Is it difficult for you to write stories? Check one:
Sometimes ..... Always ..... Never .....

21. Is it hard for you to write what you are thinking about? Check one:
Sometimes ..... Always ..... Never .....

22. Do you like to write? Check one:
Yes ..... No .....

PLAN FOR USING THE DIORAMA (2)

Procedure

1. Several weeks before the date of the actual lesson, ask children to bring shoe boxes to school. Make no further comment. Answer all questions with smiles or with "Wait and see." This will build up suspense and will get the shoe boxes into class in time for the lesson. Remind children daily.
2. During several art periods before the English lesson, teach the children how to cover the boxes. The children may use odd pieces of wallpaper, poster paper or gift wrappings.
3. Shortly after asking for shoe boxes, request volunteers to bring old magazines to school. These will be for the later use of the invariable one or two children who will forget.
4. The week before the lesson, ask children to cut out little figures, trees, plants, flowers, etc. either with a specific object in mind, such as a sport, favorite country, or some American scene, or just a general subject. Here is a perfect opportunity for early morning group discussions or even a general class discussion.
5. During art period, paint or color with a crayon, a scene for the shoe box background. This scene will be planned so as to be appropriate for the subject which the child has in mind. By now the children may well think that this is an art lesson.

   Paste little cardboard or oaktag strips to the back of each little cut-out. Bend it and paste in the shoe box to make a scene.

Cut a small peep-hole in the front of the box. In the top of the box, cut out a shape to let in light — it may be square, rectangular, crescent, or any other shape desired by the child. This cutting should take place before covering the box, if the teacher plans to do so. Of course the covering is not essential as far as the English lesson goes.

6. The children will probably become very interested and will do a beautiful piece of work. By this immersion into the picture which they are creating they will already have become somewhat part of it without conscious realization.

Conclusion — Actual week of lesson, if there has been no correlation with art:

1. *First Day* — Children paste in figures. Children who "forgot" cut out of magazines found in room.
2. *Second Day* — Put on finishing touches. Paste tissue paper, cellophane over slots; peep into each other's dioramas.
3. *Third Day* — Say to children: "Now you have created a little corner in the world which is all your own. Look into the peephole of your little world. Now we will all write a story which might take place here."

PLAN FOR USE OF RECORDING OF SOUNDS (2)

Purpose

To have the children listen to a condensed recording of typical sounds heard in a jungle over a twenty-four hour period (Sounds of A Tropical Rain Forest in America, FPX 120 B). After hearing the record, have the children write a story about the sounds they heard.

General Directions

It is felt that in order to achieve the best results with the jungle recording, the children need to spend some time being conditioned to sounds and the probable stories behind such sounds. Hence, the first day will be spent in creating a series of sounds within the child's experience, then discussing what took place.

Note: During the experiments with sound, children will be instructed to keep their eyes closed until the discussion begins. This is important because the children will be asked to write a composition in response to the sounds heard in the jungle recording.

Step 1. Procedures

Three experiments with sound are going to be performed. The sounds will be identified and discussed. The class will try to draw conclusions as to the probable story behind these sounds.

Experiment #1. Have the children close their eyes. Drop a penny on a desk. Have the pupils open their eyes and guess what caused the sound. Show them the penny and tell them that there are many things that we can identify by sound alone. Ask them to name some. (Example: water, planes, wind.)

Experiment #2. Inform the students that you are going to perform two experiments with several sounds, and they should try to guess what took place. Instruct the children to close their eyes. The teacher sits at a pupil's desk and drops a pencil, a ruler, and a book on the floor. Then replace these articles and have the pupils open their eyes. Have the children name the articles dropped. Ask if anyone can think of a story about these sounds. (Example: A pupil was asked to get ready for the next lesson, but he dropped his things on the floor because of an untidy desk, carelessness, or other reason.)

Experiment #3. Ask the children to close their eyes. Bounce a basketball on the floor, then bounce it against a wall. Let the ball roll across the room and knock two books to the floor. Make a scurrying sound by running to a seat. Now instruct the children to open their eyes, name the sounds, and a probable story behind these sounds. (Example: A student bounces a ball while the teacher isn't present. The ball knocks down some objects in the room. Then the pupil hears the teacher on his way down the hall and rushes to his seat.)

Step 2.

The teacher reviews briefly the experiments of the previous day. The recording of the jungle sounds is then introduced.

"Today I am going to play a recording of many strange sounds. While the record is playing I should like you to think how these sounds were made, where they were made, and who made them. When the record is finished I should like each of you to write a story telling about these strange sounds. Do the best you can with spelling and punctuation."

Play the recording. When it is completed, direct the children to write their stories. Tell them, for now, not to discuss their ideas with the other children.

PLAN FOR USE OF RECORDED MUSIC (2)

Purpose

To increase the flow of ideas in creative composition through the use of semi-classical and classical music.

Materials

The following recordings:

Second Movement from the

1. *New World Symphony*
2. *Waltz of the Flowers*
3. *Gaite Parisienne*

First Movement from the

4. Greig's *Piano Concerto*
5. Schubert's *Unfinished Symphony*
6. *March from Aida*
7. *Slaughter on Tenth Avenue*

Procedure

Step 1.

"Today, boys and girls, we are going to listen to some music. I think you will enjoy it if you listen carefully, because music is not only enjoyable to listen and dance to, but it also tells a story. Has anyone ever heard a story in music? We don't all have to hear a similar story in the same piece of music, because music means something different to each one of us."

"Let's see if everyone can hear a story in the music I am going to play. See if you can hear different people in your story. Perhaps a loud, slow part will remind you of the night policeman walking his beat. Possibly the quick sounds will make you think of dancing dolls. When you put all the different sounds together you will have a story."

(Have the room as dark as possible. Suggest that the children keep their heads on their desks and just listen.)

"Before I play the record, I would like you to forget who and where you are. Try to lose yourself in the music."

(Play Second Movement from the *New World Symphony*. If anyone asks to have it played again, do so. The second time you play it have the children beat time and move to the music. If they don't ask to hear it again, you suggest it to them.)

"Now that we have heard the music, let's move our hands and body to its rhythm. When I play the piece again let your arms and body do what the music suggests."

(Play music again.)

"Did anyone hear a story in the music?"

"What made you think of the story?"

"What parts of the music made you think of people?"

"What parts made you think of things?"

"Did the loud parts remind you of anything?"

"Did the soft parts remind you of something else?"

"Did the quick and slow parts make you think of a story or part of a story?"

"Do you think that someone, or all of you, could give the music a title?"

"Can you think of some colorful words and interesting sentences to describe what I played?"

"Let's see if we can put the stories we heard together to make one big story."

"Who can give me a good opening sentence?"

Step 2.

"Today, boys and girls, we are going to listen to more music. It is going to be different from what we heard yesterday. I am going to play two pieces; each one twice. First, listen and decide which one you like best. Then, when you hear them again, you can listen very closely for the story. Don't forget to let yourself go and become part of the music."

(Play *Waltz of the Flowers* and *Gaite Parisienne*. After you play one piece you can ask them if they liked it. Before playing the records again, remind them that they were to have made a choice between the two pieces of music.)

"Was it easier for you to hear a story in the music today?"

"Did your story have any people in it?"

"What do you think this person looked like? Was it a man, woman, or child? What color hair and eyes does this character have? Is he tall or short, fat or thin? Is he a good or a bad human being?

"Out of clay, I would like you to model the most important character or characters in your story. It does not have to be a person; it can be an animal or anything else you would like. I don't think you should make more than two of your characters, as you should think about the kind of person or thing he is. Don't forget that we can tell a good deal about your character from his face."

"When you finish, stand your statues on the white paper that I am going to give you. Let's see if you can find some good names for your main personalities. Why don't you write their names on the white paper under their statues? If you can think of a good title for your story, please write it at the top of the paper."

(When the class is finished:)

"Who would like to show the class his work and tell the story that he heard in the music I played today?"

Step 3.

"Today, class, we are going to hear some more music. We are also going to do something different with the story we hear."

"I am going to play two different kinds of music, and I shall play both of them twice. The first time they are played, decide which one you like best. The second time you hear them you can listen carefully for the story or stories the music suggests."

(Try to get as permissive an atmosphere as possible. Play the First Movement of Grieg's *Piano Concerto* and the First Movement of Schubert's *Unfinished Symphony*. Please do not tell the titles of the music.)

"I hope that it was easier for you to hear a story in the music today?"

"Did anyone hear a story or even part of a story?"

"What made you think of your story?

"Did the music make you think of more than one story?"

"If you heard more than one story were they alike?"

"Was your story about people?"

"What part or parts of the music made you think of these people?"

"Please use this white paper, that I will pass to you, to draw the story you heard in one of the pieces of music. Please give your story a title. You can put it at the top of the paper."

(After pictures are completed:)

"Who would like to show us their picture, and tell the story they heard in today's music?"

Step 4.

"Today, boys and girls, we are going to write what we hear in the music. I will play two pieces, and I will play them both twice. The first time you hear the music you can decide which one you like best. The second time I play it you can listen more closely for the story. Please write your composition on yellow paper. Don't worry about spelling or grammar. When you have finished, proofread your story."

(Play *March* from *Aida* and *Slaughter on Tenth Avenue*.)

PLAN FOR USE OF BEGINNING SENTENCE (3)

Step 1. **Procedure**

"Girls and boys, how many have ever heard the expression, 'Well begun is half done'?"

"Who can tell us what it means? (The teacher may explain the meaning if necessary.)

"This old saying is just as true of our language stories as it is of other things, so today I am going to help you with your language stories with this beginning sentence."

(The teacher writes:)

"No school in (teacher supplies name of town) all day," the radio announcer reported in his early morning broadcast!

"Who would like to read the sentence?" (Call on some pupil to read it.) "How many have ever heard such an announcement?"

"How many would like to work on a group story today using this beginning sentence? Good! Before I ask for the next sentence let us think about these questions."

"Were you delighted or disappointed when you heard the news? Why? Shall we describe the kind of weather or other condition that caused the unexpected holiday?

"Now, who is ready with a good sentence?" (Call on several children. Write the best on the board. Continue in this manner until the story is completed. Next call on a child to read it. If the time permits the class may reorganize or otherwise improve the story.

Step 2

"Today I am going to give you a beginning sentence which you may use to work out a story of your own. This story may be about any pet, a dog, or kitten, or about your little sister or brother if you wish.

"Now I am going to help you with your first sentence."

(Teacher writes on the board:)

My little dog, . . ., is very clever.

"Who knows why I left a space after *dog?* That is right, so that you may tell us your pet's name.

"What are some tricks you might teach your pets?"

(Teacher lists a few ideas as children supply them.)

"Remember, boys and girls, to talk about only one thing. Now, who would like to tell a story?"

Call on as many children as the language period will permit.

Step 3.

"Today, girls and boys, we are going to have the beginning sentence prepared for us again. This one may suggest a funny ending to you. If so, be sure to keep us all guessing until the very end."

(The teacher writes the following sentence on the board:)

As I glanced up from the television program, I saw the evening paper creep slowly across the floor.

"Perhaps you were alone in the house at the time. It may have been dark too. Instead of looking at television you may have been reading a

book when you noticed this queer happening. If so, change the beginning sentence enough so that we shall know what you were doing when you noticed the paper moving.

"Tell us how you felt. Were you startled for a moment or really frightened? Explain how you acted so that we can understand your story better.

"How many have an idea about what might make a newspaper creep along the floor? Good. Try to keep that part until the end or almost the end of your story."

(If the children don't seem to respond, suggest that a baby kitten or a little puppy could be under the paper, pushing it along.)

"Now who would like to tell a story?"

Step 4.

"Girls and boys, how many have a little sister or brother or a little pet at home who is always getting into mischief? Your story today may be about that little sister or brother or that pet. The beginning sentence goes like this:"

(Teacher writes sentence on the board.)

My three-year-old sister can get into more mischief than any other little girl I know.

"If you are not going to talk about your sister you may change the words to fit your own story."

"Who can make it apply to a pet?"

(Call on two or three children.)

My tiny dog, Skipper, can get into more mischief than any dog I know. Etc.

"After you have decided whom you are going to talk about, think of some mischievous thing he did recently. Be sure to tell us all the details (little things) that lead up to the point of your story. Then close your story quickly, without letting it drag. Remember to tell about only one thing."

"Who can tell us some trouble which little children or pets might get into?"

Cat knocks plants off the shelf.

Puppy plays tug-of-war with some piece of clothing mother has hung on the line to dry.

Sister scribbled over my homework last night. Etc.

"Now who is ready to tell a story?"

(Call on as many children as can be heard during the language period.)

Step 5.

"Girls and boys, how many know the story about 'The Little Lame Prince'?" Good. You remember the story tells about a little prince who, because he was lame, couldn't walk or play as other children do. He had a fairy godmother who was very kind to him. Whenever the prince needed help he would call his godmother by repeating a few magic words. Almost instantly she would make even the most impossible things come true for him.

"If you had a fairy godmother what would you ask for? Would it be for help in some school lesson? Perhaps there is something special you want to play with or to wear or to do. Think about what you want most while I'm writing on the board."

(The teacher writes.)
If I had a fairy godmother I would ask her . . .

"Remember, you may ask for only one thing. You may tell why you need it so much and what having it would mean to you.

"Please write your story in pencil. After you have written it, read it carefully. Make any corrections or changes you wish."

USE OF PICTURES

General Directions

Running directions are given, written at the left of the lesson material, for the aid of the teacher as the material is presented.

The pictures used are referred to by number as follows:

1. The two children in the woods
2. The boy looking at the train
3. The boy with the baby
4. The winter scene.

Place the pictures in front of the room where all the children can see them and study them.

Instructions to teacher:	Today we are going to do something different with pictures.
1st day	Pictures are a way of telling people our thoughts and our ideas and stories, or a part of a story.
Point out the pictures.	Here are four different pictures, which have nothing to do with each other.
Picture 1.	This is a picture about two children in the woods.
Picture 2.	Here is a picture about a boy looking at a train.
Picture 3.	Here is a picture about a boy with a baby.
Picture 4.	This picture is about winter.
Discuss each picture separately. Explain, if necessary, that a background to a story is a scene. Concentrate on one picture at a time. Get responses from different children.	Which pictures, do you think, tell a story? Why? Which pictures are part of a story? Why? Which pictures are background to a story? Why?
Place titles on the board. Later discuss, to choose good titles and why. Caution: These titles do not have to be used by the children.	What would be a good title for each picture?
Directed to picture 4. Discuss.	Are there any other pictures you could paint about winter? What would be their titles? Would they be a part of a story or would they be a background to a story?

Directed to picture 2. Discuss.	What other ideas do you have about the boy looking at the train? What does he make you think of? Could you paint a picture of it? What would you call it?
Directed to picture 3. Discuss.	Look at the boy with the baby. What other pictures do you think of when you look at this picture? What would be their titles? Would they be a story or a part of a story?
Directed to picture 1. Discuss.	What about the two children in the woods? What would be the title of another picture you could paint, that this picture makes you think of? Would it be a part of a story, or a background to a story? Look at all the pictures and pick one that you like and that appeals to you. If you have any ideas about it write them down.
2nd day	When we talked about the pictures yesterday, we didn't describe them. We found out what kinds of pictures they were; whether they told a story, whether they told a part of a story, or whether they were a background to a story. We talked about other pictures they made us think of, and gave these pictures titles. Let's look at the pictures again today. The pictures will tell each of us something different.
Repeat for each picture taking picture 3, either second or third in order. Repeat for each picture.	What do you think happened before this picture was made? What else could have happened? What do you think happened afterwards? What else might happen? If you were in the picture what would you have thought?
Multiple suggestions directed to picture 1. Indicate picture. Discuss each question and any others that are raised.	Why do you think the boy and girl are in the woods? Did they go for a walk? Where do you think they are going? Where did they come from? Do you think they are lost? Do you think they will get lost? If they get lost, what will happen? What do you think the boy and girl are like? Are they frightened? Are the woods lonely or friendly? What are the woods like at different times of the year? If the boy and girl don't get lost, when will they get home? Are they a long way from home? Were you ever in the woods? How would you feel if you were in this woods?

Multiple suggestions directed to picture 3. Indicate picture. Discuss each question and any others that are raised.

Why is the boy with the baby? Is it his brother? Has he been with the baby all day? Why is the baby crying? What else could the boy be doing? Do you think he will have to stay with the baby? What is the boy like? Did any of you ever watch a baby? What would you think and do if you were this boy? How would this picture have been painted if there were a girl with the baby instead of the boy? How would this picture have been painted if it had been winter?

Picture 2. Directions as above.

What time of day is it in the picture of the boy looking at the train? Where did the boy come from? School? Home? Play? Why did he go there? Did he go there to watch the train? Is he dreaming? What is he thinking of? Is he thinking of taking a ride on the train? Is somebody he knows on the train? Where do you think he will go after the train goes by? If you were the boy, what would you think of after it got dark?

Picture 4. Directions as above.

Look at the picture of winter. What time is it in the picture? What else could the children be doing in winter? Is it very cold? Why are they building the fire? To keep warm? To roast hot dogs? What other kinds of winter pictures can you paint? What might you do if you were in this picture?

If you have any more ideas about the picture you have picked, write them down. Ask yourself more questions about the picture, as what are the names of the children in the picture? You may also think about writing something about the picture you choose.

3rd day.

Do you remember the pictures we were talking about yesterday? Let's think about them again.

An artist paints a picture for us to look at. He hopes that we will feel something that he is telling us. We do this when we paint. We do this when we write. We do this when we talk.

Maybe you have enough ideas about the picture you have chosen so that you could tell about it. Don't tell us now. Does what you have thought of happen before the picture? Does it happen after the

3rd day. (Cont.).	picture? Does what you have to tell us take place both before and after the picture? Is it something one of the pictures made you think of, but different from a story?
*Optional: Ask the children to close their eyes — and think.	Don't tell us. Instead, think what would be the title of it? What picture did you pick? What is the first sentence of what you have thought of?
Get different children to tell their first sentences. Discuss.	Make your sentence interesting so that we will want to hear the rest of what you have to tell us some other time. Write down any more ideas you get about your picture.
4th day.	By now everyone should have something interesting to tell about the picture he has chosen. Can you tell us what you have thought about? Choose your words carefully so that we know just what you were thinking of. Do you have a story to tell us? Do you have a word picture to tell us? Who would like to start?
Have children tell their stories or word pictures.	If you get more ideas, write them down. Think of your picture and story.
5th day.	This week we have been looking at some pictures and talking about them. We have told of pictures or stories, ideas and thoughts of our own that they have made us think of. Today you may write instead of talking. If you want to tell what the picture has made you feel, and imagine, do so. You may want to tell what you think has happened before the picture. You may want to tell what you think happened after the picture. If you want to tell what you think has happened both before and after and during the picture you have chosen, you may do so.
Give the children lined paper. List information on board.	When you have finished, read what you have written carefully, make any corrections or changes you wish.